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23 December 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: CIA Relations with the Air Force on Estimates of Soviet Intentions.

1. By understanding of the origin of the March "war scare" is that General Clay wrote a letter to the Secretary of War in which he stated that although he had no specific evidence to support his position he had a distinct "feeling" that the USSR might resort to military action in the near future. I never saw Gen. Clay's letter.
2. After this letter was discussed in the Department of the Army, as I understand it, General Chamberlain called a meeting of the Directors of the IAC Agencies to discuss the situation. At this meeting, after considerable general discussion, it was decided to appoint an ad hoc working committee representing all the IAC Agencies to make a quick reassessment of Soviet intentions for the next 60 day period and report back to the Directors of the agencies.
3. I was appointed chairman of this ad hoc committee. Within a few days this committee submitted a report to a second meeting of the Directors of the IAC agencies. The Directors did not accept the full report but decided instead to submit to the President, and to publish as a CIA Special Evaluation, a short three paragraph statement under the title, "Reassessment of Soviet Intentions for the Next 60 Days", dated 16 March 1948.
4. The ad hoc committee continued its studies and subsequently published three additional estimates as follows:
 1. "Possibility of Direct Soviet Military Action During 1948", (ORE 22-48), 2 April 1948.
 2. "The Strategic Value to the USSR of the Conquest of Western Europe and the Near East (to Cairo) Prior to 1950" (ORE 58-48), 30 July 1948.
 3. "Appendices to ORE 58-48", 27 October 1948.

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5. In September the ad hoc committee was reassembled to review

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ORE 22-48, "Possibility of Direct Soviet Military Action During 1948", and to extend the period under review to the end of 1949. This was published on 16 September 1948 as ORE 22-48 (Addendum).

6. The following procedures were followed in the preparation of the above estimates:

a. The paper submitted to the second meeting of the Directors of the IAC Agencies was based upon a draft which I had submitted for the consideration of the members of the ad hoc committee.

b. In the preparation of ORE 22-48, "The Possibility of Direct Soviet Military Action During 1948", the representative of each agency on the ad hoc committee submitted a draft. I then prepared a new draft on the basis of the submissions, which, after review and amendments by the committee, was accepted as the final paper.

c. The basic work on ORE 58-48 [] was prepared by four interdepartmental subcommittees which studied, respectively, the military, economic, political and scientific aspects of the problem. On the basis of these four subcommittee studies, I drafted the paper which, after consideration and amendments by the committee, was published as ORE 58-48. The subcommittee reports were subsequently published as Appendices to ORE 58-48.

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d. The draft for ORE 22-48 (Addendum) was prepared by [] of CIA after the ad hoc committee had discussed ORE 22-48 and agreed upon the changes which it considered necessary.

7. As already indicated, these estimates have all been published and distributed to the authorized recipients of CIA studies. You will recall that after ORE 22-48 was in print, General MacDonald, Director of Intelligence, USAF, submitted an elaborate comment, which amounted to a dissent, and, which was attached in dittoed form to the published paper. The Office of Naval Intelligence also made a minor notation in the conclusions. You may recall also that you had authorized publication of this study without resubmission to the Directors of the Intelligence Agencies. ORE 58-48 []

[] included, as Enclosure B to the report, an elaborate dissent by the Intelligence Organization of the Department of the Air Force. This dissent represented the opinion of the Director of the Air Force Intelligence Organization and was prepared after the original paper had been agreed to by the Air Force working members and after changes had been incorporated which the Air Force members had anticipated would meet the objections of the Director.

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8. To my knowledge, ORE has never seen during this period any

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Air Force estimate on Soviet intentions except the preliminary draft submitted, along with those of the representatives of the other agencies, for the preparation of ORE 22-48. We have certainly never seen any Air Force estimate that could be described as likely to involve this country in war nor did we see any estimate on Soviet intentions to attack Scandinavia as reported by the Alsops. It is quite true, however, that at the time of the preparation of the CO day estimate for the second meeting of the IAC Directors and of ORE 22-48, the Air Force elements were far more alarmist than any of the others and would probably have preferred that the possibility of Soviet military action be more strongly emphasized.

9. During a number of interviews with representatives of the Hoover and the Dulles-Jackson Committees, I made the following comments with reference to the necessity for an independent, top level agency such as CIA to make intelligence appreciations and estimates for the policy makers of the Government.

a. I stated that it was virtually impossible under present circumstances to get a completely objective intelligence estimate from the Service departments, as they were unable to free themselves from the influences of departmental policy and budgetary interests.

b. As illustrative of this point, I told the committee representatives that in the preparation of ORE 22-48, the G-2 representative had stated that General Chamberlain wanted to have included in the estimate a recommendation for the draft and universal military training, which I emphatically refused to consider. I also told them that the Air Force was far more alarmist than the rest of the committee members and that everyone noted a marked change in their attitude after the 70 Group Air Force had been obtained. I may also have made reference to the fact that it was frequently the tendency of the military departments too readily to translate capabilities into intentions without giving due weight to the wide range of political, economic and psychological considerations that enter into the decision of any nation in resorting to military action.

10. I have very strong convictions concerning the points made in 9 above, which are applicable to the State Department as well as to the military Services, and I would be prepared to restate these views under any circumstances.



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